

NEWSLETTER

MENTAL
HEALTH
ARTICLES

SEPTEMBER
EDITION

INTERACTIVE
ACTIVITIES





FOUNDERS NOTE

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the inaugural issue of the Project Mind Matters newsletter. I am Smrithi Rannore, the founder of this organisation, and I am thrilled to introduce you to our vision and journey.

Often, after resolving arguments or conflicts, I found others and myself reflecting on a recurring thought: "I wish someone had taught us how to handle this." While learning through experiences is valuable, it often lacks a structured foundation.

We are taught maths and science, yet emotional and mental health management is seldom a formal part of our education. Project Mind Matters was founded from a profound commitment to transforming our approach to mental health.

In a world where mental wellness is frequently hindered by stigma and misunderstanding, our mission is to create a platform that encourages open dialogue, offers actionable insights, and fosters supportive communities.

I would like to express my gratitude to my team for joining this cause and for their enthusiastic and passionate work.

This newsletter will be the voice of Project Mind Matters. I invite you to explore its contents and join us in advancing a movement where mental health is prioritized, understood, and cultivated. Your engagement and support are crucial as we embark on this transformative journey together.

Here's to building mentally healthy communities!

NEWSLETTER

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ABOUT US

Project Mind Matters is a student-run initiative aimed at delivering quality Psycho-education to students. It provides a safe space that encourages and enhances one's mental health.

Industry

Education

Team size

112 members

Headquarters

Bangalore, Karnataka

Type

Educational

Founded

2023

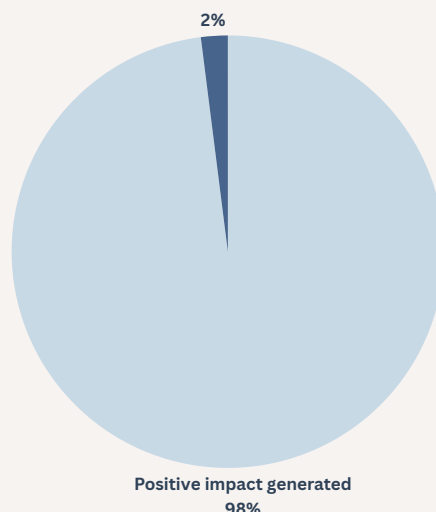
It helped me explore a new side of myself and also while providing them psycho-education. I also learned how few things are necessary for life be it communication or showing gratitude

Apoorva
(volunteer)

The presentation was amazing, excellent team work. I hope many students like me get benefited by your motivating words.

Student

ACHIEVEMENTS TILL DATE



- 112 dedicated volunteers
- 11 field experts
- Psychoeducated over 2800+ individuals
- 2100 delivery hours
- 8+ collaborations
- Runners-up: Hult Prize, MAHE



WORLD SUICIDE PREVENTION DAY

Written By: Aabha Jain and
Anshika Verma

Designed By: Ashiqa Perveen

CS Lewis once said, "There are far better things ahead than anything we leave behind." Life often feels overwhelming, but leaving everything behind is equally tough. Every year, over 700,000 people die by suicide, prompting the International Association for Suicide Prevention to mark September 10 as World Suicide Prevention Day.



This year's theme, "Changing the Narrative- **#StartTheConversation**," aims to break the stigma around suicide and encourage open dialogue. Understanding the difference between suicidal ideation (thoughts about ending one's life) and a suicide attempt (a deliberate but unsuccessful attempt) is crucial.

Suicidal thoughts can be active or passive, and while mental health conditions, substance abuse, and past attempts increase risk, not everyone with suicidal thoughts will attempt suicide.



Risk factors include loneliness, violence, abuse, grief, and financial problems. Despite growing awareness, stigma remains, deterring many from seeking help. It's vital to remember that perspectives on struggles can vary widely. What might seem minor to one person can feel overwhelming to another.

Everyone plays a role in suicide prevention—whether it's recognizing mental health issues, showing compassion, or seeking timely help. As Al Green said, "Suicide is not an answer, it's destruction." We must strive to create a supportive, understanding world where everyone is met with empathy and given hope.

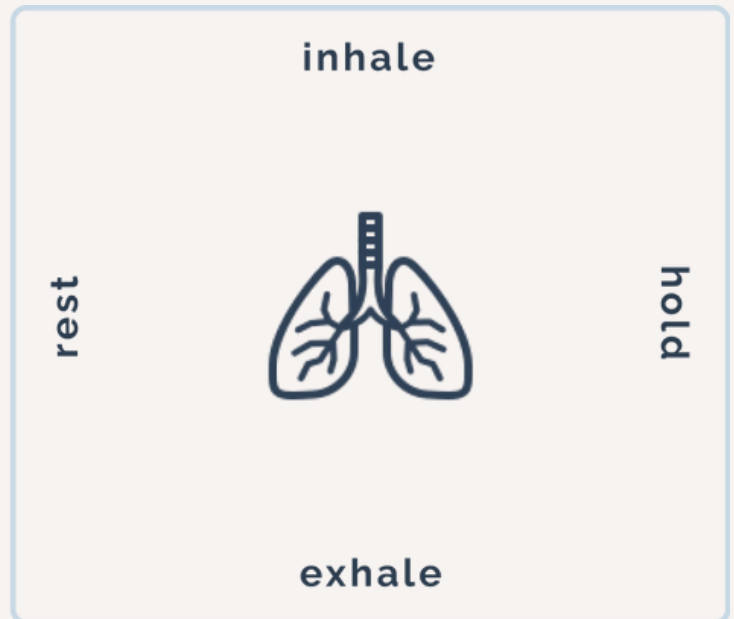


As Carl Bard wisely noted, "Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start and make a brand new ending."



BOX BREATHING

Moving on we have the Box breathing method, a deep breathing technique which is an effortless breathing exercise that can help you center yourself and focus.



STEP 1

Sit or lie down; position yourself by place one hand on the chest and the other on the stomach. Make sure your back is supported, with feet firmly planted on the ground

STEP 2

Visualize a box/square in your mind

STEP 3

Slowly breathe in through your nose to the count of four, while being aware of the air entering your lungs.

STEP 4

Hold your breath for 4 seconds, try to avoid inhaling/exhaling

STEP 5

Slowly exhale via your mouth for 4 seconds.

STEP 6

Continue like this as one traces the sides of a box until you feel re-centered.

It works wonders for stress release and cleansing of the mind, and all you need to execute it is literally anywhere and anytime.



WORLD ALZHEIMER'S DAY



Unveiling Alzheimer's

Umm, what was I talking about? Ah, yes, that's right —Alzheimer's disease. We observe World Alzheimer's Day on the 21st of September every year to raise awareness about the disease, challenge the stigma surrounding it and be of support to the millions that are affected by it directly and indirectly worldwide.

Written By: Anupama Menon
Designed By: Shrey Gupta

The Struggle and Resilience: Navigating Life with Alzheimer's

Broadly defined under Dementia, Alzheimer's is a progressive neurodegenerative disorder leading to memory loss, cognitive decline, and behavioural, psychological and mood changes. It's the most common type of dementia, accounting for up to 70% of cases. It was named after the German psychiatrist, Alois Alzheimer, who first identified it in 1906 in his patient after observing unusual changes in the brain tissue, such as clumps of amyloid plaques and tangled bundles of neurofibrils, which are now known to be key markers of the disease.

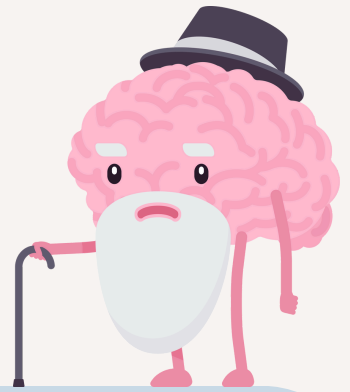
From Stigma to Support: The Ongoing Fight Against Alzheimer's Disease

The theme for this year is "Know Dementia, Know Alzheimer's" and is encouraging people affected by the disease worldwide to share their stories, to give them a voice. Although it is a devastating condition, it's a forgotten disease among others. Therefore, by observing this day, it gives insight on the growing number of people that is affected by this condition and promote efforts in research, and policy-making that could help manage or even prevent this condition. Reports say that more people die from Alzheimer's than from breast and prostate cancer together.



Although it typically affects older adults, the risk doubles every five years after the age of 65. However, it can have an earlier onset, around ages 40 and 50. A lot of factors such as genetic predisposition, lifestyle, age, level of cognitive activity, etc affect its development. However, the exact cause remains unknown. The most common symptom is memory loss, followed by difficulty in planning or solving problems, confusion with respect to time or place, changes in mood or personality with these symptoms worsening progressively.

At present, a cure for Alzheimer's haven't been found but certain treatments aimed at managing the symptoms and improving the quality of life has proven to be effective. Such treatments involve medications, cognitive therapies, and modifying lifestyle and has shown to help slow down the progression of the disease. However, it remains to be an irreversible condition. Family and social support for the patient have proven to be effective in managing the symptoms.



Living with Alzheimer's can feel like losing yourself and everything that made you "you" in a fog that thickens over time. You once remembered every little detail of your partner, your children, your house but now you are struggling to recognise the person you see in the mirror. This experience is as heart wrenching for the caregivers as is for the patient. It's a continuous, daily challenge of being patient, empathetic, and resilient. They are forced to balance the emotional toll of watching their loved one's personality and behaviour change along with the emotional, mental and physical demands of caregiving.

So, as World Alzheimer's Day unfolds, let us all remember the importance of understanding, supporting, and hoping for a future where this disease no longer robs us of our precious memories. Until then, awareness is our best tool in the fight against Alzheimer's.

Oh, what was I talking about? Yes, Alzheimer's. It's something we should all be talking about a lot more.



Step 1: Start at the centre (where basic emotions like happiness, sadness, anger, etc. are found) locate where you think you have the emotion currently experienced.

Step 2: go outwards, where the emotions get more specific and closer to the edges, for example, contentment or frustration. Which emotion is the closest to what you are feeling right now? If you run into some obstacles, try eliminating the ones you are not feeling

Step 3: Say it out loud. "I am feeling..."

Step 4: give yourself a minute, to let this feeling sink in. Allow yourself to notice how it feels in your body, the thoughts going through your head and how it changes as you pay attention to it.

THE FEELING WHEEL

Sometimes feelings can be big and intense, and other times they're quiet, buried away, and harder to recognize. If you're feeling frustrated and angry, it might be difficult to point to just one feeling, but having several to choose from may help you to zero in on exactly what's going on inside.

This brings us to our last but not least, the feeling wheel, it is a handy tool which helps organize the different dimensions of feelings we may have into several categories and subcategories to help you pinpoint exactly how you're feeling, which can be helpful, especially if you're overwhelmed by your emotions or in a heated communication. Here is how to use the feeling wheel:

It is a great way to learn, understand and even improve your recognition of what you're really feeling, especially when you can't quite put it into words.





MENTAL HEALTH

MYTHS VS. REALITY

Mental health is a vital component of overall well-being, yet numerous myths and misunderstandings continue to perpetuate stigma, hinder access to care, and obscure our understanding of mental health conditions. Dispelling these myths with accurate information is crucial for fostering a more supportive and informed society

One pervasive myth is that mental illness is a sign of weakness or a lack of character. This misconception implies that individuals with mental health issues are simply not strong enough to cope with life's challenges. In reality, mental health conditions can affect anyone, regardless of their strength or resilience. These conditions often arise from a complex interplay of biological, psychological, and environmental factors. Just as physical illnesses like diabetes or heart disease are not reflections of personal weakness, mental health conditions should not be perceived as such.





Another common misconception is that mental illness is rare and affects only a small portion of the population. Contrary to this belief, mental health conditions are far more prevalent than many realise. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), one in four people will experience a mental health condition at some point in their lives. Conditions such as anxiety, depression, and bipolar disorder are common, and it is likely that most people will either face mental health challenges themselves or know someone who does.

A particularly damaging myth is the notion that individuals with mental illness are more prone to violence or dangerous behaviour. This stereotype is often reinforced by media portrayals which are quite damaging to people who suffer with mental illnesses. However, the majority of people with mental health conditions are not violent. In fact, they are more likely to be victims of violence than perpetrators. Most individuals with mental health issues lead normal, peaceful lives and do not pose a threat to others.

There is also a widespread belief that therapy is only for those with severe mental health problems. This is not true. Therapy can be beneficial for anyone, regardless of the severity of their concerns. It provides a safe space to explore thoughts and feelings, develop coping strategies, and enhance overall well-being. Whether managing stress, improving relationships, or pursuing personal growth, therapy is a valuable resource for maintaining good mental health, and seeking it should be viewed as a proactive step, not a sign of weakness or failure.





Additionally, there is a misconception that medications for mental health, such as antidepressants or anti-anxiety drugs, are inherently addictive. While certain medications can be misused, most mental health medications, when taken as prescribed, are not addictive. These medications play a crucial role in managing symptoms and improving the quality of life for many people. It is essential to consult with healthcare providers to find the most appropriate treatment and to address any concerns about medication use.

Understanding and debunking these myths is vital for us to move forward as a society in the aspect of mental health. These changes will help people who feel that they are mentally ill to come forward and seek help and heal.

Written By: Tanvi Yadlapati
Designed By: Nivitha Mahendran





THOUGHT TRACKER

A thought record sheet is like a diary used to catalogue one's thoughts, especially when they are feeling down or stressed out.

How do we go about it? Well let's follow some steps to understand how:

Step 1: lets identify the thoughts that's been troubling you and write it down.

Step 2: Give it an initial rating, how strongly do you believe in the truthfulness/authenticity of the thought.

Step 3: make a list of all the reasons why the thought might be true. Don't censor anything – just jot it down.

Step 4: make another a list but this time, with all the reasons why this thought might not be 100% true.

Step 5: Now go back to the original thought, evaluate the evidence, all of the reasons why it might or might not be true.

Step 6: write down your new thought

Step 7: Rate how strongly you believe in the new thought and compare it with your old thought (0-100%).



DATE:

WHAT HAPPENED

IMMEDIATE THOUGHT

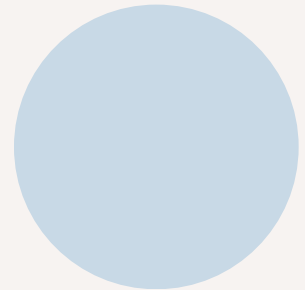
INITIAL FEELING

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.....

.....

RATE



NEW FEELING

.....

.....

.....

RATE



BALANCED THOUGHT

